

THE Talon

Operation Joint Endeavor, Bosnia-Herzegovina



Brown speaks of 'hardship, sacrifice'

Commerce Secretary's visit to Bosnia ends in tragedy

By Staff Sgt. AMY GUNNERSON
203rd MPAD

Dubrovnik. All 35 people on board, including six crew members, were killed.

Earlier that day, Brown joined 709th troops and the commander of the 18th MP Brigade, Col. Stephen J. Curry, for breakfast in their dining hall, a renovated metal ware-

GUARDIAN BASE
— On the day of his untimely death, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown visited soldiers of the 709th Military Police Battalion, 18th MP Brigade, here on April 3 to thank them for their "hardship and sacrifice."

The visit took place on the first day of a planned three-day trip to the Balkans.

An Air Force T43A and a delegation of American business executives crashed later that day after veering off course on the approach to the Dubrovnik, Croatia airport. The group planned to meet with officials in



Ron Brown

house. Several of the businessmen and women were matched up with soldiers from their home state for a chance to swap news from home for news from Bosnia.

After a hot breakfast, Brown addressed the troops and told them they should be proud of their "lead role in

See **BROWN**, page 12



Pfc. Jody Johnston

Second Lt. Brian Hittner (standing) consults a map with Bradley gunner Spc. Lacy V. Locklear before rolling out on a mission. The soldiers are members of 1st Platoon, C Troop, 1st Cavalry.

Cavalry rolls through ZOS in show of force

1st Platoon, C Troop, 1-1 Cavalry troops perform daily patrols for peace

By Pfc. JODY JOHNSTON
358th MPAD

ZONE OF SEPARATION — The soldiers of 1st Platoon, C Troop of the 1st Armored Division's 1st Cavalry, constantly patrol the zone of separation to ensure the former warring factions uphold the requirements of the Peace Agreement.

The agreement was signed in Paris on Dec. 14, 1995.

First Platoon patrols in Bradley Fighting Vehicles once a day to monitor the ZOS as

a show of force in northeastern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"Today, our mission was to go out and put up signs in front of the zone of separation," said 2nd Lt. Brian Hittner, 1st platoon leader.

"The signs are written in Serbo-Croatian, and say, 'You are entering the zone of separation — no weapons or military personnel allowed,'" Hittner said.

Occasionally, the infantrymen in 1st platoon run into violations of the Peace Agreement.

"While we were out on patrol, we spotted some military vehicles in front of a building," Hittner said.

"We went down to see what they had, and

it turned out that it was an undeclared weapons storage site."

The 1-1 Cavalry keeps inventories of all of the former warring factions' weapon sites — where they are, and what weapons are stored in each site.

"We did a full inventory of their weapons," Hittner said. "That way, if they move them, we will know, and we can keep track of all of their weapons, and where they are."

As the days go on, the patrols have become less eventful.

The 1-1 Cavalry troops have helped ensure the former warring factions are complying with the Peace Agreement. The Cav soldiers, therefore, are helping to keep peace in the former Yugoslavia.

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From the top

Taking time to remember the basics

During a deployment such as Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, it's important for us in the noncommissioned officer corps to remember some basic responsibilities.

First of all, we need to observe our troops.

While some of us may hesitate to pry into our soldiers' personal lives, ask your troops if they have written a letter home lately. Sometimes, they may be dragging because they have not communicated with their families by writing letters and, consequently, may not have received much correspondence lately.

Although telephoning is expensive, it's another way for troops to keep in touch. We are all working long hours, but we



**Command Sgt.
Maj. Jack L. Tilley**
1st Armored
Division

need to remember that — in a few short months — we will be reunited with our families. Let's not take for granted those wonderful people who are supporting us at home.

Another thing to remember is to

monitor the stress levels of your troops. Do you have a soldier who seems depressed or "out of it?" If so, ask him how much sleep he has been getting, if he has been eating properly and if he is keeping up his personal hygiene.

These may seem like basic concerns, but some soldiers "let themselves go" on long deployments. If they don't get enough rest or proper nutrition — or slack off on their hygiene — they may become haggard.

Make sure you give yourselves and your troops some time off each week. If you are having a particularly busy week, at least set aside a few hours where you can catch up on your sleep.

Of course, it's best to schedule yourself and your soldiers one day off per week. It helps them recharge their batteries and be able to face another work week.

"Sergeants make it happen." It's an old saying, but it's true. When it comes to accidental discharges (we've had several lately), it's up to NCOs to train their soldiers on how to properly clear their weapons and avoid these dangerous occurrences.

We are fortunate we have not lost a soldier because of these discharges. Recently, a soldier's M16A2 discharged in a Humvee and the round ripped through the soft top. If that

weapon had been pointed in another direction, it could have seriously injured or killed a young soldier.

I personally hold every NCO responsible for taking care of our troops. Their lives are in your hands. Constantly think, "safety, safety, safety."

A new quarter has begun for reenlistments. Several MOSs have been added to the bonus list. And options can be processed nine months before a soldier is scheduled to ETS.

The BEAR (Bonus Extension and Retraining) program allows a soldier to reclassify into a new, critical MOS and then draw a bonus after graduating from Advanced Individual Training. See your retention NCO for details.

It's not just up to retention NCOs to locate the best soldiers to retain. Retention is everybody's business.

Viewpoint

A newfound respect for combat life saver training

I was approached last week by my sergeant major and he asked me if I would like to go to the combat life saver course, to be taught here in Bosnia. I shrugged my shoulders, nodded and said, "Sure, why not? It will look good on my NCO evaluation report."

But, after March 31, my attitude changed after a convoy trip to the zone of separation in the Nordic sector. The convoy came to a halt just east of Dobo, when we came across a local farmer carrying his young son who had just stepped on



**Staff Sgt.
Joseph Garrison**
29th MPAD

an anti-personnel mine, destroying his left foot.

Luckily, our convoy included four combat life savers from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Armored Division Artillery.

The soldiers rose to the occasion — without a moment's hesitation.

My hat is definitely off to these fine soldiers: Sgt. Joseph J. Sclama, Sgt. Brian Findley, Sgt. Patrick J. Grawcock, Sgt. Robert A. Henderson Jr. and the other soldiers — American and Swedish — who assist-

ed in the emergency at Checkpoint Alpha 2-2.

With their training and obvious dedication to duty, these noncommissioned officers saved the young boy's life by performing immediate life-saving acts until further medical help arrived.

They protected the wound, controlled the bleeding, worked to prevent shock and calmed the wounded child. The soldiers acted professionally, although they were under great stress. Other soldiers in the convoy immediately called for an evacuation via helicopter that took just 11 minutes to arrive.

The four combat lifesavers, I'm proud to say, were given

impact Army Achievement Medals for their brave actions.

Brig. Gen. Stanley F. Cherrie, assistant division commander for maneuver, visited the youth as he recuperated in a Nordic hospital. Cherrie lost a foot and suffered other injuries when he was injured by a mine blast in Vietnam.

Now I have a more positive view on volunteering for the combat life saver course, and any other course that may help in an emergency situation. I now realize this training may one day help me come to the aid of my fellow soldiers and civilians while stationed in Bosnia, and throughout life.

THE TALON

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■ CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Friendships in the Army family

Since being assigned to the 1st Armored Division, I have experienced many rich and rewarding friendships. A day has not gone by that I have not gained a new friend. The same thing is true since being deployed to Bosnia.

As a matter of fact, I have received many cards and letters from old friends I had almost forgotten and had long since lost touch with through the years. Oh, how good it is to catch up with friends you have not seen for years, but care about very much.

I regret that I had not kept up with all of these old friends, but obviously that didn't seem to matter to most of these fine people. Many of whom I had not seen since coming on active duty in 1979, but they talked like we had never been apart.

One old friend named Jim Critchlow came by Task Force Eagle Headquarters recently on temporary duty from the Pentagon. Jim and I had been assigned together in 1980 at Fort Ord, Calif. What a surprise to walk in the office and find him visiting with another chaplain. We immediately picked up exactly where we had left off some 16 years ago. What a rich time of reminiscing and renewing close ties, and seeing an old friend again in the middle of



**Chap. (Maj.)
Kenneth
Kolenbrander**
Deputy Division
Chaplain

Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Many of us have been enriched with these friendships for years in the Army family and have great difficulty keeping in touch with everyone. But then, that's a really nice problem to have. Thanks be to God for the important people in our lives. The gift of friendship is indeed one of the finest and most lasting gifts in life.

God has modeled this kind of friendship for us through many

Biblical accounts. Many of us have looked to God for help through this deployment, and what a peace to know that He answers our prayers and provides true friends that look out for us through thick and thin.

That is what we lovingly call the "buddy system" in Army deployment terms. Thank God that we have a Heavenly Father that always watches over us and cares for us even in our worst moments. "What a friend we have in Jesus," as the old hymn goes.

Join us in one of many chapel services this coming Sunday around the ZOS and increase your friendship factor. May God bless you richly. He is the friend "who sticks closer than a brother."

He is a friend indeed — dear Task Force Eagle soldiers.

Checkmate!



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

While waiting for 23rd Engineer Battalion soldiers to blow up a damaged portion of the Brcko bridge with C-4 explosives in Gunja, Croatia, Staff Sgt. Jim Nicholson, a 432nd Civil Affairs sergeant, and Spc. Matthew Stormoen (left), a communications specialist with HHC 1st AD Eng. Bde., take advantage of the downtime to play a game of chess in their Humvee.

News briefs

Holocaust week at TFE

Task Force Eagle Commander Maj. Gen. William L. Nash has proclaimed April 14-21 as Days of Remembrance for Victims of the Holocaust.

The dates are meant as a time for soldiers to remember the 6 million Jews, as well as millions more Gypsies, Slavs and others who "were systematically murdered by Nazi Germany and their collaborators from 1933 to 1945."

April 19 marks the anniversary of the major armed uprising by young Jewish men and women in the Warsaw ghetto against Nazi soldiers, followed later by revolts in Treblinka and Sobibor.

Lukavac will host special programs scheduled for 8-9:30 a.m. and 10-11:30 a.m. April 15-20 at the 1st Armored Division Support Command headquarters tent.

The lives of actual Holocaust victims will be discussed at each session, according to Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Watkins, DISCOM equal opportunity adviser.

A movie profiling Holocaust victims also will be shown at each session.

For more information, call Watkins at MSE 558-5727.

Nash said in his proclamation that the week is a time for reflection and "hope that we will strive always to overcome prejudice and inhumanity through education, vigilance, appreciation and commitment to equal justice for all."

1st ID flags fly to Germany

Fort Riley said goodbye to one unit and welcomed another March 29 as part of the transition to make a smaller army.

The 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, was renamed the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division at Fort Riley, Kan.

The soldiers there will remain at Fort Riley. The 2nd Brigade colors will move to Germany and remain part of the 1st Infantry Division, which moved its headquarters to Germany last month.

The 1st Infantry Division has been assigned to Fort Riley since 1955. Fort Riley has 11,500 soldiers, down from 15,000 in June 1995.

The post retains two combat brigades, one each belonging to the 1st Infantry Division and the 1st Armored Division.

R&R policy officially begins April 15

By Sgt. 1st Class
BETTINA E. TILSON
29th MPAD

The Rest and Recuperation Program for Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR is scheduled to officially begin Monday.

Troops will be offered air transportation from Eagle Base, Tuzla, to Frankfurt, Germany. They may then take an additional free flight to Philadelphia. Additional travel will be at the soldier's expense or on a space-available basis.

The R&R program is designed to provide soldiers deployed to Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR a break from the intensity of the peace enforcement mission and a chance to spend time with their family and friends.

Active duty service members, reserve component personnel and DoD civilians on tours exceeding 180 days are eligible for the program, which will continue through mid-November.

"Everybody may not be able to go on the date they want to go, but everybody should have an opportunity to go," said Sgt. 1st Class Louisa W. Scott, G1 Division Main noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

The Central Region (Germany) R&R program starts April 15 with the Continental United States program starting on April 23.

Weekly passenger flow for Germany will be about 405 seats from Tuzla. Flights to Tuzla will originate from Rhein Main Air Base in Frankfurt on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Weekly passenger flow for CONUS is about 185 from Tuzla.

Flights originating from Rhein Main will be used to take soldiers to Germany for follow-on travel to Philadelphia. Flights for Tuzla will depart Rhein Main on Tuesdays.

Soldiers are instructed to travel to and from the area of operations in Battle Dress Uniform. Soldiers traveling to CONUS are authorized to wear BDUs to their ultimate leave destination.

Personnel are allowed one carry-on bag and one check-in bag not to exceed 66 pounds.

Personnel departing Eagle Base or Rhein Main will report three hours prior to flight time for personnel accounting processing and with an approved DA Form 31 or its equivalent for non-Army personnel.

Carlson Wagonlit Travel Co. is one company that will be offering discounts to soldiers on airline tickets, including connecting flights from Philadelphia, rail tickets and car rentals. The company is scheduled to set up a tent April 23 on the flightline at Eagle Base.

R&R a time for fun, caution

By Maj. SIMON PINCUS
84th Medical Detachment

Most of us have been waiting anxiously for R&R. Task Force Eagle soldiers have worked hard, weathered the cold, walked through the muck and have earned a well-deserved rest. Our success has largely been a result of sound military discipline including strict rules of engagement, four-vehicle convoys, wearing battle rattle, living in base camps and not drinking alcohol.

Boarding the plane for two weeks of travel or home, soldiers will be filled with excitement and high expectations. It's time for fun. It's time for reunions with friends, family and loved ones. It is important to blow off steam and recharge emotional batteries. This release is important to successfully complete our year-long mission. This R&R is well-deserved.

With deployments come change. You may want to talk about what you've seen or done. Others may seem not to want to listen. Or you may not want to talk about it when others keep asking. You may have changed. So may have your significant other. Face-to-face commu-

nication may be hard at first. Sexual closeness may also be awkward at first. You may be on a different schedule of sleeping and eating.

Those soldiers with children may feel hurt when young children are slow to hug them. Single soldiers may experience loneliness as others reunite with their families.

There are some useful tips to help cope with R&R expectations. Go slow. Be prepared to make adjustments. Romantic conversation can serve as a prelude to sexual intimacy. Take care with your budget to avoid over-spending. Go easy on partying. Avoid scheduling too many things.

Be patient with loved ones. Find out what they've done during the separation. Listen actively. Make individual time for each child and your spouse. Single soldiers may want to share their R&R with a buddy.

Leaders and buddies should ask fellow soldiers how their R&R went and offer support if needed. Most of all, have fun and come back safe.

For further information on coping with R&R, call Division Mental Health, 558-5667 or 84th Medical Detachment, 558-5607.

Tax break to be reflected in April end-of-month pay

By Sgt. 1st Class **BETTINA E. TILSON**
29th MPAD

Soldiers who are looking for more money in their paychecks because of the new Combat Zone Tax Exclusion will see those extra dollars reflected in their end-of-month pay.

The tax exclusion was signed into law March 20 by President Clinton.

The Defense Finance and Accounting office estimated it would take six weeks to make the necessary changes to the pay system, so the tax breaks will be seen by the May 1 payday.

Under the law, base pay for enlisted members and warrant officers is completely exempt from federal income taxes. For officers, the first \$4,158.60 a month

in 1995 and the first \$4,254.90 in 1996 is exempt.

Bonus payments, such as reenlistment bonuses, also are tax exempt.

The law is retroactive to Nov. 21, 1995 — the date the Peace Agreement was announced.

Under the law, DFAS is not allowed to refund taxes previously withheld, so soldiers will need to file for their refunds when they file their federal income tax returns.

DFAS will issue corrected 1995 W-2Cs for soldiers by end-of-month April, but only for those soldiers who were deployed to the area of operations in December. The 266th Finance Command has requested duplicate W-2Cs to send to family members in the rear. The 8th Finance Battalion (For-

ward) will distribute W-2Cs when they receive them.

Soldiers who have already filed their 1995 income taxes will need to submit an amended return (1040X) for refunds.

Troops will not have to file their federal income taxes until 180 days after they depart the qualified area. When they do file, they will not have to pay any penalties or interest for that period.

Soldiers must, however, write "Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR" on the top of their return.

April's mid-month pay statement will have a statement in the remarks block on the Combat Zone Tax Exclusion.

For more information, contact your unit tax advisor or 8th Finance Battalion (Forward) at MSE 551-7309 or 558-5630.

Black Hawks provide electronic surveillance

By **Spc. GEORGE ROACHE**
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — If unauthorized radio calls are ever a problem, one 7th Battalion, 227th Aviation, 4th Air Cavalry Brigade, platoon can offer a "quick fix."

Flying over designated areas, the crews of C Company's Quick Fix Platoon use their specially equipped EH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to conduct electronic surveillance from the air over Bosnia.

Its threefold mission is to locate, monitor and, if necessary, jam unauthorized radio transmissions by former warring factions.

"Quick fix derives from the fact that we can fairly quickly locate an enemy and transmission source and can pinpoint it fairly accurately," said Chief Warrant Officer Steven Woodfint, 35, an instructor pilot from San Jose, Calif.

The platoon performs airborne eavesdropping over areas of interest for the 501st Military Intelligence Brigade. Pilots and crews gather signal intelligence that analysts combine with human observations and photographs to piece together a complete picture of what's happening in the field.

Spc. Mark A. Biddison, 35, of Siloam Springs, Ark., and Staff Sgt. Eric Shull, 30, of Fort Wayne, Ind., are linguists who operate the helicopter's signal-collecting and direction-finding equipment.

Both learned Russian at the Defense Language Institute and are in the process of picking up the finer points of Serbo-Croatian. They spend four to five hours a day monitoring radio signals for information.



Spc. George Roache

Staff Sgt. Eric Shull (left) and Spc. Mark A. Biddison, operating the Black Hawk's signal-collecting and direction-finding equipment, prepare for a mission.

"We're mostly just making sure they (former warring factions) are keeping with the (Peace Agreement)," Woodfint said. "Anything we do get, we send back to the 501st. They're the people who analyze it."

Gathering signal intelligence from the air offers advantages not available from ground sources.

"You're higher up and you have a better line of sight to what might be transmitting," said Biddison, a former Arkansas National Guard field artilleryman.

"With the helicopter, we can cover a lot

more ground," Woodfint said. "The ground assets usually drive in place and operate from a fixed base. We have the capability to sweep all over the area. We can cover a pretty big area this way."

Shull said he gets the most satisfaction from being in the air, but he also likes helping the crew chiefs perform maintenance.

"When we have a little free time," he said, "we'll come out and help these guys work on the aircraft ... because we love the aircraft, love flying and it's a team effort."

MCR soldiers curtail illegal police checkpoints

Civilians complain of harassment by local police hindering freedom of movement in former Yugoslavia

By **Spc. CESAR G. SORIANO**
29th MPAD

In an effort to curtail illegal checkpoints operated by local civilian police, Military Civil Relations soldiers are conducting an information campaign to inform the police of their rights and responsibilities.

Capt. Timothy J. Neely, detachment commander of B Company, 9th Battalion, 4th Psychological Operations Group (Military Civil Relations), said IFOR troops have observed a number of illegally operated checkpoints that have prevented civilian freedom of movement.

Civilians have complained that police officers at these checkpoints were harassing, and even making people pay "tolls" to cross some checkpoints. Though mostly non-violent, Neely describes such checkpoints as "a nuisance."

"IFOR is working on this situation strictly in a supportive role," Neely said. "Our goal is to curb the establishment of illegal checkpoints."

To accomplish this goal, the MCR unit is ensuring posters are distributed to local police stations. These posters inform police of what they are authorized to do and what they cannot do. Local police stations must declare all checkpoints to the International Police Task Force, the U.N. civilian governing body which oversees all local police stations in the former Yugoslavia.

To get the word out about the IPTF and checkpoint requirements to the local populace, MCR plans to address the issue in an article in its weekly newspaper, "The Herald of Peace."

In addition, IFOR soldiers have also been given copies of the handbill to distribute to local police should they come across an illegal checkpoint while on routine convoys.

"We're here to support IPTF ... but IFOR may be called upon to shut down any illegal checkpoint," Neely said. The handbills — which are printed in Serbo-Croatian in the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets to emphasize impartiality — state that all faction leaders have agreed "that full freedom of movement is a fundamental right (of civilians)."

In addition to reporting to IPTF, civilian police who work at checkpoints may have no military involvement, cannot be discriminatory (stopping only vehicles with certain license plates), cannot be located within the zone of separation and cannot be used to search vehicles.



Spc. Teresa Hawkins

Warrant Officer Dobrev Nicolai balances a flower on his nose.



Spc. Teresa Hawkins

A Russian cook plays billiards in his spare time at the brigade headquarters in Ugljevik, Bosnia-Herzegovina.



Spc. Teresa Hawkins

Russian and American band members prepare to perform for the troops.



Spc. Bryan Driver

Russian soldiers wash up before going to dinner outside their checkpoint.

Russian Airborne Brigade

By Spc. BRYAN DRIVER
1st Armored Division PAO

At the Russian Brigade, headquartered in Ugljevik, there are more than 1,500 soldiers manning 12 checkpoints in the zone of separation, northeast of Tuzla.

The brigade, known as the "Airborne Brigade," is made up of the 1st Battalion, located in Priboi, and the 2nd Battalion located in Simin Han.

Organized inside the brigade are infantry, armor, engineer, artillery, military police, chemical and supply el-

ements, supporting operations in 75 kilometers of the ZOS.

The brigade conducts checkpoint operations, weapons site inspections and combined patrolling in its sector with elements of the 1st Armored Division's 1st and 2nd Brigade Combat Teams.

The unit was organized less than a year ago to support peacekeeping operations in Bosnia.



*Spc. Bryan Driver*

A Russian soldier stands at his post, keeping a watch on the sleepy town below in the zone of separation.



Maj. John Bushyhead, HHC, 1st Armored Division, translates for Lt. Col. Sergey Muhamorav during a trip to a village in the zone of separation.

*Spc. Bryan Driver*

Lt. Col. Sergey Muhamorav and a local teen-ager walk down a small village road during a convoy break.

■ USING ROBOTS IN THE ARMY

40-ton Panther tank prowls for land mines

By Sgt. CHRISTINA STEINER
203rd MPAD

CAMP BEDROCK — Ten soldiers from three 1st Armored Division engineer battalions recently completed training on the Panther, a 40-ton remote-controlled tank and mine roller. Although the Panther was used in Germany during the fall of 1995, this was the first time it had been used in Bosnia.

Companies of the 16th, 23rd and 40th engineer battalions, headquartered in Bamberg, Friedberg and Baumholder, Germany, trained last month on the Panthers. B Company, 16th Engineer Battalion, will receive one Panther; and companies A, B, and C of the 23rd and 40th will each receive one. A total of seven Panthers will be issued to the three battalions.

Soldiers at Camp Bedrock have been trained on the Panther, as well as the miniflail, a small mine sweeper, and the combat engineer vehicle, a bulldozer-like vehicle with a sweeper that removes large obstacles, such as bunkers.

"The Panther can be driven by remote control or by a driver," said Sgt. John C. Hutton Jr., one of the trainees from B Company, 16th Engi-



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

A Panther with mine rollers makes its way down a muddy hill at Camp Bedrock.

neer Battalion. "The remote can control the suspension, brakes, steering and transmission. It rolls over a mine, which explodes and is destroyed.

"It offers an advantage to its drivers," Hutton added. "The driver can operate the Panther in a minefield, jump out, allow the Panther to sweep and destroy the mines by remote, then jump inside and drive the vehicle away."

Rick Law, a civilian trainer for the Panther, further explained: "The Panther has been operating for several years," he said.

"Initially, it was designed for testing weapons, but we realized it could save manpower. We're training the engineers to use it and calibrate it. It is as simple as running a remote-controlled car," Law said.

The Panther mine roller,

which weighs about 8,000 pounds in the front portion only, detects anti-personnel and anti-tank mines. The mines are destroyed before the Panther rolls over it.

Capt. Anthony Reed, commander of B Company, 16th Engineer Battalion, said the training went well.

"Everyone was enthusiastic and interested in learning," he said. "I wish training could have lasted longer."

16th Engineer Battalion trains on mini mine-sweeping robot

By Sgt. CHRISTINA STEINER
203rd MPAD

CAMP BEDROCK — Spc. Juan Carrasco, A Company, 16th Engineer Battalion, of Bamberg, Germany, is one of the few Army experts on the miniflail — a robotic anti-personnel mine-clearing vehicle, operated solely by remote control.

There are only two miniflails in the world, and A Company has both.

Carrasco was chosen to train on the miniflail based upon his performance and interest in robotics, said his company commander, Capt. Frederic Drummond.

"It's fun and I like robotics," Carrasco said. "I trained for a few weeks in Germany for this."

"This (miniflail) is brand new to the Army," Drummond said. "It's used on low-intensity conflicts and for roads, shoulders and trails. We've worked on it for five months in Germany. It is the first unmanned vehicle issued to soldiers in a war-like situation."



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

Multi-national soldiers watch a demonstration of the miniflail. There are only two such robotic mine-sweeping vehicles in the world.

■ KEEPING FIT

NCO pumps up troops with aerobics class

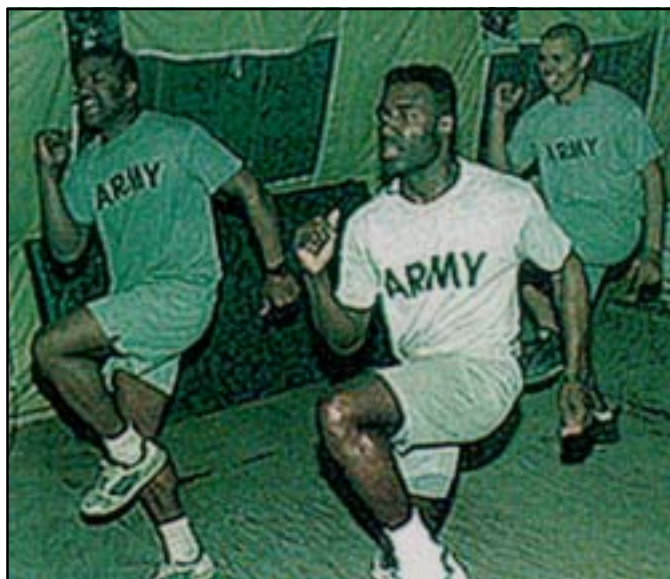
By Sgt. KELLY C. FISCHER
358th MPAD

KIME BASE — During the first months of deployment, soldiers in full combat gear got a workout filling lots of sandbags.

But until the free weights and stairmasters arrived at some base camps, there wasn't much opportunity for traditional exercise. Thanks to the unfailing initiative of the NCO Corps, soldiers at Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade now have an aerobics class to attend as well.

After going a good two months without much physical training, Sgt. David D. Wilson, 26, liaison officer driver, HHC, 1st Brigade, decided to pursue a plan to organize an aerobics class. The Rocky Mountain, N.C., resident has two years of experience teaching aerobics at his previous duty station at Camp Covey, Korea.

"A lot of people don't like to do physical activities by themselves," Wilson said.



Sgt. Kelly C. Fischer

Soldiers pick up the beat at Kime Base's aerobics class.

"So, I thought if we do it collectively, a lot more people would come out to exercise."

"If he hadn't started it, I wouldn't have exercised on my own, that's for sure," said Pfc. Labrandi T. Covey, supply clerk for HHC, 1st Brigade. "It's a little hard, but I can deal with it."

The challenging workout is attracting more and more soldiers. The class has grown from an initial four participants to 13. Each class brings repeat visits and new faces. "The more people, the more fun," Wilson said.

The class, which is a mix of male and female, officer

and enlisted, brings soldiers back because it is an excellent workout. Wilson's exercises work a range of muscles from the neck down, emphasizing the abdominals and calves. Wilson's philosophy is "if you sweat and if you make that muscle burn, then you're going to get something out of it."

Wilson bounces and stretches to a mix of recorded soulful rhythms that encourage reciprocated energy from the class. The soldiers take the opportunity to put a little groove into their moves. They work hard, but they obviously have fun.

"Aerobics and dancing go hand-in-hand because it takes some rhythm — just a little bit," Wilson said. "It's all about how you feel. If you feel the music, then you can do the exercises."

"I love this class," said Sgt. Frieda D. Varvaro, HHC, 1st Brigade from Columbia, S.C. "It gives people a chance to release some stress and build a little bit more camaraderie."

Guardrail aircraft in Hungary keep watch on Bosnia

By Spc. MELISSA GARCIA
361st PCH

TASZAR, Hungary — The morning air is crisp and the frost covers the grass surrounding the flightline. As the sun breaks, it casts an eerie shadow across several antennas of the highly sophisticated equipment located on an air strip that houses "guardrail" aircraft.

The plane, an improved guardrail common sensor, is one of several military aircraft flying missions in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. The plane's crew members gather intelligence through radio transmissions from various sources on the ground during their flights over the Balkans.

"Unlike most intelligence systems where you have to go through national agencies to access sensitive information or imagery, the guardrail commander can send out the aircraft at a moment's notice for timely intel gathering," said Capt. Scott R. West of Atlanta, who is the S1 of the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade.

"This information is vital," said Staff Sgt. John Tooley, an electronic technician with the battalion's Bravo Company. "The information gathered at the Intelligence Processing Facility, is forwarded to an Intelligence Processing Facility, where the captured information in the air is disseminated by linguists and counterintelligence specialists, and serves to forewarn them of any trouble on the way."

"Any threat to the peace enforcement operation is reported immediately to headquarters," Tooley added.

Tooley, a native of Warrenton, Va., describes the guardrail as "pretty much a flying receiver or radio — just like driving around in your car and tuning in different frequencies."

Tooley said he was not at liberty to discuss the specific details of his job.

As silent partners in force protection, the MI soldiers will continue to soar above Task Force Eagle, enforcing the provisions of the Peace Agreement.



Spc. Melissa Garcia

Staff Sgt. John Tooley, an electronic technician, says information gathered serves to forewarn officials of any trouble.

■ RELIGION

Jewish soldiers celebrate Passover season

By **Spc. GEORGE ROACHE**,
29th MPAD and
Staff Sgt. EUGENE P.
DeFORREST, 203rd MPAD

Unable to celebrate Passover with their families this year, Jewish Task Force Eagle soldiers found fellowship with each other at a traditional Seder meal April 3, commemorating the exodus of Israelites from Egypt 3,400 years ago. The Seder at Eagle Base was attended by Jewish soldiers and others.

As the Seder began, Chap. (Col.) David Zalais noted, "For the last few years, there has been a lot of blood shed here (in Bosnia). We have a Jewish expression: He who saves one life has just saved an entire world. We have brought a degree of tranquillity to this land. Jewish soldiers can be proud of their contribution."

"This is a milestone — being part of an IFOR mission in Bosnia," said Spc. Bill Pummill, 30, of San Diego. "I'm not in the States with my family, but at least I'm here with fellow Jews, having a good dinner and good conversation."

"Passover is a time of thankfulness for our family values, a family holiday when we can get together and have a good meal with our loved ones," said the helicopter fueler for 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry from Buding, Germany.

Like Pummill, many of the

soldiers who attended the Seder wore black or camo-colored yarmulkes on their heads. Plates of motzah, green peppers, onions, tomato wedges and horseradish were set in front of them. Candles, blessed by a Jewish female soldier in a prayer shawl, burned on the head table before the chaplain conducting the millennia-old ceremony.

"This is a celebration of Jewish people," said retired Chap. (Col.) David Lapp, "the holiday in which we celebrate freedom and deliverance from the tyranny of pharaoh."

Lapp, head of the New York City-based Jewish Welfare Board, was 1st Armored Division chaplain from 1973 to 1976. At the U.S. Army Europe's invitation, he came to Bosnia to conduct the Seder.

Zalais, who lives in Jerusalem, brought many of the Seder's kosher dishes from Israel, and assisted Lapp in preparing the feast in accordance with Jewish dietary laws. The meal included gefilte fish, motzah ball soup and beef and chicken stews and other courses served.

Lapp and Zalais took turns leading the more than 60 celebrants, nearly half of whom were non-Jewish, through reading the Haggadah — the story of the Exodus. It consists of psalms, prayers and other biblical readings.

"It's a religious service that you celebrate with your family,"



Spc. George Roache

Jewish soldiers read from a prayer book during the traditional Seder meal at Eagle Base April 3.

said Spc. Lisa Silberstein.

"I'm usually with my family every year. 'This year I'm not, but when I'm in a room filled with Jewish soldiers, it almost feels like I am,'" said the 21-year-old native of Hamden, Conn. She is a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Armored Division Support Command from Bad Krueznach, Germany.

Many soldiers traveled some distance to attend the Seder. Pummill is based at Camp Snead in Gradacac, and Silberstein lives at Lukavac.

Spc. Daniel Cass, 21, of Amarillo, Texas, came from Camp Bedrock, where he is based with A Company, 16th Engineer Battalion, 130th Brigade out of Bamberg, Germany.

"This is quite an experience being in a land where people are repressed for their beliefs,"

he said. "I'm glad I'm here tonight celebrating this as a memorial to our fathers who fought and struggled to get out of Egypt."

Pfc. Eric Nazario, 21, of Queens, New York was baptized Catholic and raised Protestant until age 11, when his father married a Jewish woman. He said he attended out of respect for his stepmother's family, and his father's conversion to Judaism.

"When you participate in any religious service, yours or not, it's special," said Nazario, of C Company, 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry, based at Lodgment Area Demi, two hours south of Tuzla. "It's honorable and reverent, to sit there and understand and respect. I feel good insofar as I took part in a sacred religious ceremony."

Retiring V Corps chaplain performs Easter service



Spc. George Roache

Chaplain (Col.) James B. Lonergan

By **Spc. GEORGE ROACHE**
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — In more than two decades as a chaplain, Col. James Barry Lonergan, 57, as seen the Berlin Wall crumble, newly freed Iranian hostages celebrate Thanksgiving and an American president worship in the Korean demilitarized zone.

A diocesan Catholic priest from Albany, N.Y., Lonergan did three tours in Korea and two in Germany.

Now the V Corps command chaplain stationed in Heidelberg, Germany, he made his final swing through the field bringing the message of peace to the peacemakers of Operation JOINT Endeavor before he retires in May.

Lonergan performed one of his last services on Easter Sunday at Comanche Base.

"This is my second trip to the Balkans ... This year I've come to Bosnia to bring the message of Easter to the soldiers deployed here.

"Also, it's my swan song -- an opportunity to say goodbye to the soldiers I've been able to serve for the last 24 years," said the native of Ticonderoga, N.Y.

Lonergan visited several camps in Hungary and Bosnia-Herzegovina during his final trip through the field. He said he hoped to bring a word of cheer to soldiers, and found them to have a "hooah attitude that is phenomenal."

"They have endured an awful lot for the last four months (and) it has not broken their spirits," he said.

■ PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

Soldier celebrates heritage with bagpipes



Spc. Robert W. Bishop

Staff Sgt. David A. Hughes performs at a recent change of command ceremony at Comanche Base.

By Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

Staff Sgt. David A. Hughes has found in his Scottish heritage a way to literally blow off the stress of deployment — playing the bagpipes.

Hughes is a supply sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bat-

talion, 227th Aviation at Comanche Base. He accounts for the unit property and equipment spread over three countries: in garrison in Hanau, Germany, in Hungary and here in Bosnia.

He must account for all unit equipment each time the battalion moves. Deployments change the tempo of his job tremendously, as did his

battalion's recent change of command.

Blowing the bagpipes, he said, helps him relieve the stress.

"It gives me a break," the 34-year-old Prather, Calif., native said. "I love hearing the music and the tranquillity. It reminds me of the good time I had growing up and going to the clan (family) meetings. It makes me think of home and lifts my spirits."

Hughes began playing the instrument after his first real exposure to his heritage at age 12.

"In the mid-1960s, my grandfather, Frank Fraser, joined the Clan Fraser Association," he said. "That's a Scottish Highland clan affiliated with the United Scottish Society of California. My grandfather said it was good to learn about history, so he took me and my brother to clan gatherings up in the Cleveland National Forest," in central California.

There, Hughes saw men and women dressed in traditional Scottish garb of the 18th century: kilts in the mostly red Hunting Fraser clan tartan; pouches called sporrans worn in the front; and the 18-inch half-swords known as dirks.

While the children had free run of the mountains, the adults played traditional Highland games like caber (or pole) tossing and the ax throw.

The bagpipes, a centuries-old instrument, allows pipers to play even while taking a breath, Hughes said.

"The technique is known as literally 'blowing your arm off the bag,'" he said. "As you're

taking a breath, you're squeezing the bag to keep a steady airflow to the reeds. When blowing, you're inflating the bag, which lifts your arm off it. It takes four good breaths for me to pump it up before playing."

Hughes learned to play because the family needed pipes, and one of the members offered free lessons to anyone who would come to his home every Thursday.

He still uses the music book he received in 1972, a 300-page collection of marches, folk tunes and dances known as "strathspreys, reels and jigs." He has found his unique talent popular with Germans in Hailer, where he lives with his wife Kim; his son Zachary Raymond William, 5; and daughter Alex Elizabeth, 3.

Hughes said, "I get invited to play at German music festivals, weddings and parties. They don't mind me playing it during quiet hours."

He always takes his pipes to the field, and at Comanche Base he performed in two change of command ceremonies.

For Hughes, playing the bagpipes is a way of living his heritage.

"It gives me a serenity that a lot of people don't have and few find," he said.

"It makes me feel good about myself and doing a part in my son or daughter's upbringing. It's something they can either build on or forget. If they want to play the pipes, I'm willing to teach them."

Soldiers have various options when phoning home

By Spc. CESAR G. SORIANO
29th MPAD

Soldiers have several choices when picking up the telephone to call home.

AT&T has set up phone centers at several camps in Task Force Eagle. The cheapest way to call home through AT&T is using the Military Saver Plus (MSP) Program.

With the plan, a call to the United States is \$1.14 per minute, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 99 cents a minute from midnight Friday to midnight Sunday. MSP calls to Germany are \$1.64 per minute weekdays, and \$1.49 weekends.

To join the MSP service, dial "88" on USADirect phones, wait for an operator and ask for Military Customer Service. Operators can help switch an old AT&T card to an MSP card, or apply for a new MSP card on the spot. There is a monthly charge of \$8.50 for MSP customers, which is waived if no calls are placed in a month.

Regular per minute AT&T calling card rates to the United States are \$1.75 the first minute, \$1.50 each additional minute, plus a \$2.50 initial service charge for each call. Collect calls are the same, but with a \$5 initial service charge for each call.

AT&T prepaid calling cards also are available at post exchanges in \$20, \$40

and \$60 denominations. Calling card costs are \$1.30 per minute to the United States and \$2.50 per minute to Germany.

Soldiers who have an MCI or Sprint calling card can also use those carriers through an MSE telephone, according to Sgt. Maj. David Mulholland, G-6 sergeant major.

For soldiers based in Germany, call the DSN number at your home unit and ask to be transferred to the 0130 toll-free access number for MCI or Sprint, Mulholland said. Calls will be billed as originating from the home unit city to the destination city. For soldiers based in the United States, the procedure is the same, using the 1-800 toll-free number for MCI or Sprint.

Brown, from page 1

bringing peace and stability. You have done your job. I have special empathy for you all. I served in the Army for five years, and I know the hardship and sacrifice it takes."

He said he had coordinated the trip for chief executive officers of a dozen U.S. companies to incorporate economic peace with the military peace.

"As peace comes, the people of this area expect their living conditions to change for the better. We can do that. We're strong economically and militarily and we understand how the two fit together." Brown said the contribution U.S. businesses and the military would make together "not only gets the country back on its feet but ensures it can stay there."

Brown was briefed on key operations by Brig. Gen. Stanley F. Cherrie, assistant division commander for maneuver, Task Force Eagle. Cherrie said military operations have gone exceedingly well, highlighting the recent success of the repair and opening of the Brcko bridge to traffic and repairing roads.

Cherrie said IFOR has been successful in garnering Bosnian air defense artillery weapons at designated sites, and the next step is to put all of their soldiers in cantonment areas. Demobilization of their forces has already begun, he said, and former soldiers will need civilian work. "This is where the economic opportunity comes in," Cherrie said. "They want to work. I can tell you from first-hand experience these people are hard workers."

Brown and the delegation boarded buses and traveled to Tuzla's Thermo Electric Power Plant, where they took a short



Staff Sgt. Amy Gunnerson

Brown eats breakfast with Col. Stephen J. Curry, 18th MP Brigade commander (left), Brig. Gen. Stanley F. Cherrie (to Brown's left) and soldiers of the 709th MP Battalion at Guardian Base on the morning of April 3.

tour of the plant and control room.

"This is the man with the real power, right?" he said, smiling, as he shook the hand of a local worker in the plant's control room. The group then participated in a round-table discussion with power plant officials and local officials through an interpreter. They discussed efforts to bring the plant back up to its full capacity and clean coal technologies.

Brown told the group, "It is our desire to have American companies fully engaged in the reconstruction effort. I think our presence here today represents that we are anxious, willing and able to work with you

on this project and others like it."

The death of Brown and the U.S. business executives aboard the plane cut short the group's efforts to promote U.S. private-sector involvement in the Balkan reconstruction process.

The trip was the launching of U.S. business commercial opportunities in the Balkans with an estimated \$5.1 billion reconstruction assistance program by the U.S. European Union and international finance institutions.

Brown, 54, had served as Secretary of Commerce in the Clinton Administration since 1993.

■ MILITARY POSTAL SERVICE

Soldiers critique mail service in Task Force Eagle

By Pfc. JODY JOHNSTON
358th MPAD

EAGLE BASE — Mail is a soldier's life line to home and family, and plays a large role in the morale of troops on any deployment.

To gauge the success of its service, the 90th Personnel Services Battalion sent out surveys to 16,000 U.S. troops requesting input on how the mail is flowing in Task Force Eagle.

The survey was conducted between Jan. 1 and Feb. 15, said Lt. Col. Jamiel S. Saliba, commander of the 90th PSB.

A total of 16,000 surveys were mailed out, and 5,000 were returned. "That is a 31 percent response," Saliba said.

Many responses received by the PSB shared common

themes about the mail service.

"Soldiers said that it takes up to five days to receive mail from Germany, and an average of 10 to 11 days to receive it from the States," Saliba said.

One-fourth of Task Force Eagle's population had some concerns about the time it takes for mail to come in and out of theater, Saliba said.

There are a number of factors that can affect mail timeliness:

- Unreliable weather in the United States. If an airport closes for one day in the States, it delays mail 8 to 14 days.
- Incorrect addresses.
- Insufficient and unreliable transportation assets to move mail to the soldiers.

"The good news is, the bad weather is about over," Saliba said. "The force is more stable, and addresses are more accurate."

"We also have dedicated transportation in the form of a contract with Brown & Root Inc. to move the mail to the brigades."

The contract began Feb. 26. "As a result of the contract, we have seen great improvements," he said.

Currently, mail coming from the APO in Germany takes three to four days to reach the APO in Tuzla. It takes six to eight days for mail to reach Tuzla from the States, he added.

It should take no longer than five days for mail to reach soldiers from Germany and no more than nine days to reach

them from the States. "That is, if it's sent first class," he said. If mail takes longer, soldiers should go through their chain of command to find out why.

"I think that we would be fooling ourselves to think that there will be no mistakes with the mail," Saliba said.

"The bottom line is, mail is a success story for Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. There has not been an operation in recent history where the mail has been handled better than in this operation," he added.

